DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 193 HE 026 803

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TITLE Minority Medical School Enrollment in the SREB States.
INSTITUTION Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, Ga.
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 12p.
AVAILABLE FROM Southern Regional Education Board, 592 Tenth St., N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318-5790 ($3).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indians; *Blacks; College Applicants; Educational Trends; *Enrollment; Higher Education; *Hispanic Americans; Medical Education; Medical Schools; *Medical Students; Minority Groups; Student Recruitment

ABSTRACT

This publication reports on minority enrollment in medical schools in the states of the Southern Regional Education Board. Between the 1990-91 academic year and 1992-93, enrollments of black medical students rose by over 15 percent. These increases in total and minority enrollments in the region were paralleled at the national level though national rates of increase were generally lower. Some of the growth in total enrollments is attributed to sharp increases in the applicant pool for medical school since the late 1980s. The number of black students enrolled in the region's 41 allopathic and four osteopathic medical schools grew by 213 students, 30 percent of the total enrollment growth in the region. Thirty of the region's 45 medical schools reported increases in both the absolute numbers of black students and in their percentage representation on the overall student body. Limited data on Hispanic enrollments found that in the two states with high Hispanic populations, Florida and Texas, enrollments of Hispanic students increased by an average of 9 percent, a faster rate than total enrollments. The percentages of Native American students in the region's medical schools are approximately .5 percent. The actual numbers of students have grown, expanding by almost 21 percent nationally in the last 2 years. Includes five tables. (JB)

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MINORITY MEDICAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN THE SREB STATES

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Southern Regional Education Board

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MINORITY MEDICAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN THE SREB STATES

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1993
$3.00

Minority student enrollment has increased significantly in the region's medical schools since the publication of the Southern Regional Education Board's 1991 report, *Recruitment and Retention of Minority Medical Students in SREB States.*

Between the 1990-91 academic year and 1992-93, enrollments of black medical students in the SREB region rose by over 15 percent; enrollments of Native American students increased by almost 20 percent. In those states with large Hispanic populations, enrollments of Hispanic medical students increased by an average of 9 percent. The same two-year period saw total medical school enrollments in the SREB region grow by a much more modest 3.4 percent.

These increases in both total and minority enrollments in the region were paralleled at the national level, but the national growth rates were generally slower—2.2 percent overall; 9 percent for black students.

Some of the growth in total enrollments can be attributed to sharp increases in the applicant pool for medical school since the late 1980s. Total applicants to all M.D. medical schools, for example, increased by 40 percent between the 1988-89 and 1992-93 entering years. Numbers of minority applicants increased at a generally higher rate than non-minority applicants. Enrollments of black, Hispanic, and Native American students rose at a disproportionately rapid rate relative to their share of the applicant pool, however.

Black Students

The number of black students enrolled in the region's 41 allopathic (M.D.) and four osteopathic (D.O.) medical schools grew by 213 students between 1990-91 and 1992-93 (Table 1). This number represents 30 percent of the total enrollment growth in the region and 52 percent of the growth in enrollment of black medical students nationally during this period.

The growth raised the percentage of blacks among medical students in the SREB region from 6.8 percent to 7.5 percent. This remains far short of the 18.2 percent of the region's population who are black, and even of the 12.1 percent national figure. Nevertheless, it represents a significant acceleration in the growth rate of black student enrollments. The 213 black students added to medical school rolls during this two-year period is almost equal to the total increase of 228 black students in the region in the preceding 10 years.

Thirty of the region's 45 medical schools reported increases in both the absolute numbers of black students enrolled and in their percentage representation in the overall student body. Schools with double figure gains in both numbers of students and growth rate include: the **University of Alabama**, the **University of Arkansas**, **Morehouse Medical School**, the **University of Maryland**, **Bowman Gray School of Medicine** of Wake Forest University, **East Carolina University**, **Meharry Medical College**, the **Medical College of Hampton Roads**, and the **Medical**

TABLE 1
Growth in Enrollment of Black Students in Medical Schools in SREB States, 1990-91 to 1992-93

STATE - % Blacks in Population	1990-91 ENROLLMENT			1992-93 ENROLLMENT			PERCENT CHANGE 1990 TO 1992	
MEDICAL SCHOOL	TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT	TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT	TOTAL	BLACK
All Schools in SREB States - 18.2%	**20,740**	**1,400**	**6.8%**	**21,449**	**1,613**	**7.5%**	**3.4%**	**15.2%**
All U.S. Schools - 12.1%	**71,955**	**4,458**	**6.2**	**73,517**	**4,869**	**6.6**	**2.2**	**9.2**
Percent in SREB Schools	28.8%	31.4%		29.2%	33.1%			
ALABAMA - 25.3%	**922**	**44**	**4.8**	**963**	**66**	**6.9**	**4.4**	**50.0**
U of Alabama School of Medicine	672	24	3.6	689	44	6.4	2.5	83.3
U of South Alabama School of Medicine	250	20	8.0	274	22	8.0	9.6	10.0
ARKANSAS - 15.9%	**538**	**39**	**7.2**	**568**	**52**	**9.2**	**5.6**	**33.3**
University of Arkansas	538	39	7.2	568	52	9.2	5.6	33.3
FLORIDA - 13.6%	**1,812**	**105**	**5.8**	**1,899**	**117**	**6.2**	**4.8**	**11.4**
Southeastern Col of Osteopathic Med *	426	23	5.4	493	29	5.9	15.7	26.1
U of Florida College of Medicine	456	28	6.1	458	22	4.8	0.4	-21.4
U of Miami School of Medicine *	553	39	7.1	565	48	8.5	2.2	23.1
U of South Florida College of Medicine	377	15	4.0	383	18	4.7	1.6	20.0
GEORGIA - 27.0%	**1,482**	**207**	**14.0**	**1,509**	**204**	**13.5**	**1.8**	**-1.4**
Emory U School of Medicine *	447	28	6.3	455	28	6.2	1.8	0.0
Medical College of Georgia	724	47	6.5	719	34	4.7	-0.7	-27.7
Mercer U School of Medicine *	164	12	7.3	178	10	5.6	8.5	-16.7
Morehouse School of Medicine **	147	120	81.6	157	132	84.1	6.8	10.0
KENTUCKY - 7.1%	**842**	**25**	**3.0**	**899**	**34**	**3.8**	**6.8**	**36.0**
U of Kentucky College of Medicine	354	7	2.0	377	14	3.7	6.5	100.0
U of Louisville School of Medicine	488	18	3.7	522	20	3.8	7.0	11.1
LOUISIANA - 30.8%	**1,074**	**55**	**5.1**	**1,107**	**59**	**5.3**	**3.1**	**7.3**
Louisiana State U Sch of Med-New Orleans	691	41	5.9	717	50	7.0	3.8	22.0
Louisiana State U Sch of Med-Shreveport	383	14	3.7	390	9	2.3	1.8	-35.7
Tulane U School of Medicine *	592	13	2.2	595	20	3.4	0.5	53.8
MARYLAND - 24.9%	**1,064**	**104**	**9.8**	**1,067**	**122**	**11.4**	**0.3**	**17.3**
Johns Hopkins U School of Medicine *	469	46	9.8	468	48	10.3	-0.2	4.3
U of Maryland School of Medicine	595	58	9.7	599	74	12.4	0.7	27.6
MISSISSIPPI - 35.6%	**389**	**30**	**7.7**	**393**	**30**	**7.6**	**1.0**	**0.0**
U of Mississippi School of Medicine	389	30	7.7	393	30	7.6	1.0	0.0
NORTH CAROLINA - 22.0%	**1,828**	**173**	**9.5**	**1,841**	**195**	**10.6**	**0.7**	**12.7**
Bowman Gray School of Medicine *	437	27	6.2	435	39	9.0	-0.5	44.4
Duke University School of Medicine *	459	36	7.8	459	34	7.4	0.0	-5.6
East Carolina U School of Medicine	289	35	12.1	298	45	15.1	3.1	28.6
U of North Carolina School of Medicine	643	75	11.7	649	77	11.9	0.9	2.7
OKLAHOMA - 7.4%	**812**	**38**	**4.7**	**865**	**27**	**3.1**	**6.5**	**-28.9**
Oklahoma State U Col of Osteopathic Med	273	13	4.8	296	8	2.7	8.4	-38.5
U of Oklahoma College of Medicine	539	25	4.6	569	19	3.3	5.6	-24.0

TABLE 1 (cont'd)

STATE - % Blacks in Population / MEDICAL SCHOOL	1990-91 ENROLLMENT TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT	1992-93 ENROLLMENT TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT	PERCENT CHANGE 1990 TO 1992 TOTAL	BLACK
SOUTH CAROLINA - 29.8%	**804**	**30**	**3.7**	**816**	**34**	**4.2**	**1.5**	**13.3**
Medical U of South Carolina	548	21	3.8	535	20	3.7	-2.4	-4.8
U of South Carolina School of Medicine	256	9	3.5	281	14	5.0	9.8	55.6
TENNESSEE - 16.0%	**1,495**	**314**	**21.0**	**1,629**	**382**	**23.4**	**9.0**	**21.7**
East Tennessee State U Col of Medicine	234	29	12.4	236	27	11.4	0.9	-6.9
Meharry Medical College **	291	225	77.3	367	288	78.5	26.1	28.0
U of Tennessee College of Medicine	591	52	8.8	628	54	8.6	6.3	3.8
Vanderbilt U School of Medicine *	379	8	2.1	398	13	3.3	5.0	62.5
TEXAS - 11.9%	**4,750**	**134**	**2.8**	**4,892**	**144**	**2.9**	**3.0**	**7.5**
Baylor College of Medicine *	651	15	2.3	656	16	2.4	0.8	6.7
Texas A&M U College of Medicine	193	6	3.1	193	6	3.1	0.0	0.0
Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine	372	4	1.1	416	5	1.2	11.8	25.0
Texas Tech U School of Medicine	389	2	0.5	397	2	0.5	2.1	0.0
U of Texas Medical School-Houston	768	22	2.9	794	24	3.0	3.4	9.1
U of Texas Medical School-San Antonio	818	19	2.3	831	22	2.6	1.6	15.8
U of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston	768	36	4.7	808	36	4.5	5.2	0.0
U of Texas Southwestern Med Sch-Dallas	791	30	3.8	797	33	4.1	0.8	10.0
VIRGINIA - 18.6%	**1,584**	**82**	**5.2**	**1,613**	**114**	**7.1**	**1.8**	**39.0**
Medical College of Hampton Roads *	368	14	3.8	402	25	6.2	9.2	78.6
Medical College of Virginia	658	33	5.0	665	49	7.4	1.1	48.5
U of Virginia School of Medicine	558	35	6.3	546	40	7.3	-2.2	14.3
WEST VIRGINIA - 3.1%	**752**	**7**	**0.9**	**793**	**13**	**1.6**	**5.5**	**85.7**
Marshall U School of Medicine	192	0	0.0	205	0	0.0	6.8	0.0
W Virginia Sch of Osteopathic Medicine	240	4	1.7	257	8	3.1	7.1	100.0
West Virginia U School of Medicine	320	3	0.9	331	5	1.5	3.4	66.7

* Independent school
** Independent, predominantly black school

SOURCES: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; Association of American Medical Colleges; SREB Survey of Medical School Enrollments, 1992-93.

College of Virginia. Included in this group are some schools that led in enrollment of black students two years ago, as well as several that were not doing very well at that time.

An important factor that must be taken into consideration when discussing medical school enrollments, particularly for state-supported schools, is the size of the state's minority population. Table 2 lists all 32 of the region's public medical schools ranked according to the percentage of black students in their total enrollment. The four top schools in this ranking also occupied the top four spots in 1990-91, albeit in a different order. The same is true for the fifth through the eighth ranked schools.

TABLE 2

Ranking of Public Medical Schools in SREB States by Percentage Black Enrollment (all levels) 1992-93

PUBLIC MEDICAL SCHOOL	BLACK ENROLLMENT (all levels) PERCENT	BLACK ENROLLMENT (all levels) RANK	PERCENT BLACK POPULATION IN STATE (1990)	BLACK MEDICAL STUDENT INDEX*	INDEX RANK
East Carolina U School of Medicine	15.1%	1	22.0%	0.69	3
U of Maryland School of Medicine	12.4	2	24.9	0.50	9
U of North Carolina School of Medicine	11.9	3	22.0	0.54	5
East Tennessee State U Col of Medicine	11.4	4	16.0	0.72	2
U of Arkansas College of Medicine	9.2	5	15.9	0.58	4
U of Tennessee College of Medicine	8.6	6	16.0	0.54	5
U of South Alabama College of Medicine	8.0	7	25.3	0.32	19
U of Mississippi School of Medicine	7.6	8	35.6	0.21	25
Medical College of Virginia	7.4	9	18.8	0.39	12
U of Virginia School of Medicine	7.3	10	18.8	0.39	12
Louisiana State U Sch of Med-New Orleans	7.0	11	30.8	0.23	23
U of Alabama College of Medicine	6.4	12	25.3	0.25	21
U of South Carolina School of Medicine	5.0	13	29.8	0.17	27
U of Florida College of Medicine	4.8	14	13.6	0.35	16
Medical College of Georgia	4.7	15	27.0	0.18	26
U of South Florida College of Medicine	4.7	15	13.6	0.35	16
U of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston	4.5	17	11.9	0.37	14
U of Texas Southwestern Med Sch-Dallas	4.1	18	11.9	0.35	16
U of Louisville School of Medicine	3.8	19	7.1	0.54	5
Medical U of South Carolina	3.7	20	29.8	0.13	28
U of Kentucky College of Medicine	3.7	20	7.1	0.52	8
U of Oklahoma College of Medicine	3.3	22	7.4	0.45	11
W Virginia Sch of Osteopathic Medicine	3.1	23	3.1	1.00	1
Texas A&M U College of Medicine	3.1	23	11.9	0.26	20
U of Texas Medical School-Houston	3.0	25	11.9	0.25	21
Oklahoma State U Col of Osteopathic Med	2.7	26	7.4	0.37	14
U of Texas Medical School-San Antonio	2.6	27	11.9	0.22	24
Louisiana State U Sch of Med-Shreveport	2.3	28	30.8	0.07	30
West Virginia U School of Medicine	1.5	29	3.1	0.49	10
Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine	1.2	30	11.9	0.10	29
Texas Tech U School of Medicine	0.5	31	11.9	0.04	31
Marshall U School of Medicine	0.0	32	3.9	0.00	32

* Percentage black population in state divided by percentage black students in each school.

SOURCES: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; Association of American Medical Colleges; Bureau of the Census; SREB Survey of Medical School Enrollments, 1992-93.

Comparing each public medical school's percentage of black students to the percentage of blacks in its home state population reveals a somewhat different picture. When the schools are ranked according to their "black medical student index," only five of the top eight schools in percentage enrollment remain in the top eight. Using this approach, the **West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine** emerges as a leader in enrolling black students. Its 3.1 percent enrollment of black students is identical to the state's 3.1 percent black population.

There are limits to the usefulness of this type of comparison. One is that the enrollment numbers for most medical schools include both in-state and out-of-state students, and the proportions of in- and out-of-state students vary widely among different schools, even in the public sector. The second problem is that the figures for the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine are based on a total of only eight black students, so that a change of a few students would have a major impact on its black medical student index. Acknowledging these limitations, it should be pointed out, however, that even with half its current number of black students, the school still would rank ninth by this measure.

In general, comparisons of minority student enrollments to minority populations probably are most useful if viewed in conjunction with other indicators. For example, it would not seem unreasonable to conclude that the regional leaders in enrolling black students are those schools that rank in the top quartile of public schools in *both* percentage enrollment and black medical student index: **East Carolina University**, the **University of North Carolina, East Tennessee State University**, the **University of Arkansas**, and the **University of Tennessee**.

At the other end of the spectrum, any medical school in a state with a large black population and a very low black medical student index probably could be regarded as having serious shortcomings in providing opportunities for medical education to its black citizens.

The 13 independent medical schools in the SREB region enroll a much higher overall percentage of black students than the 32 public schools (Table 3). Much of this difference can be attributed to the fact that two of those independent schools—**Meharry Medical College** and **Morehouse School of Medicine**—are among the nation's four predominantly black medical school programs. Even when Meharry and Morehouse are left out of the equation, the remaining 11 independent schools still enrolled a somewhat higher percentage of black students in 1992-93 than the public schools. Percentages of new first-year black students were down for these independent schools, however, while that figure was up slightly for the public schools and substantially higher for the two predominantly black schools. (It should be noted that many SREB states provide additional opportunities for black residents interested in attending medical school through contractual arrangements with Meharry and Morehouse.)

Three of the independent schools that are not predominantly black—**Johns Hopkins University**, **Bowman Gray School of Medicine**, and the **University of Miami**—have percentages of black students that are comparable to the top public schools. Independent medical schools generally draw stu-

TABLE 3
Enrollment of Black Students in Medical Schools in SREB States by Type of Medical School, 1992-1993

MEDICAL SCHOOL CATEGORY	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	ALL LEVELS			NEW FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS		
		TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT	TOTAL	BLACK	PERCENT
Public	32	15,821	883	5.6%	4,003	233	5.8%
Predominantly Black Independent	2	524	420	80.2	113	99	87.6
Other Independent	11	5,104	310	6.1	1,269	72	5.7

SOURCES: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; Association of American Medical Colleges; SREB Survey of Medical School Enrollments, 1992-93.

dents from a much wider geographical range than public schools. As a result, a black medical student index based on state population probably would not be very meaningful for most independent schools, though it might be useful to develop such an index based on either regional or national population figures.

Hispanic Students

It is not possible to make a clear comparison between total Hispanic enrollments in the region and the United States as a whole. Data available through the Association of American Medical Colleges include only Hispanics of Mexican American or mainland Puerto Rican origin. The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine does not distinguish between Hispanic students of different national origins.

Hispanics represent more than three percent of the population in only two SREB states—Florida and Texas. The Hispanic population of Texas is predominantly Mexican American, while Hispanic residents of Florida reflect a more diverse range of backgrounds, including a large and growing Cuban American population. To accurately reflect the performance of Florida's medical schools in enrolling Hispanic students, therefore, it was determined at the time of the 1991 report that all types of Hispanic students who are United States citizens would be counted. For the present follow-up study, data on all Hispanic students were obtained directly from the 12 medical schools in Florida and Texas.

As indicated in Table 4, during the past two years, enrollments of Hispanic students in both Florida and Texas increased at a faster rate than total enrollments. Overall, the Florida schools appear to be doing a better job of providing opportunities to their Hispanic citizens than those in Texas. In fact, the overall enrollment rate of Hispanics in the four Florida schools—11.7 percent—is very close to the 12.2 percent of all Floridians who are Hispanic.

Interestingly, the two independent Florida medical schools—the **University of Miami** and **Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine**—account for almost 75 percent of the state's Hispanic medical

students. This probably results in part from the fact that both of the independent schools are located in the Miami area of south Florida, where the largest percentage of Hispanics live. Nevertheless, it is still somewhat surprising to find the independent schools doing so much better than the public medical schools in this respect, especially given the lower tuition costs at the public schools

The percentage of Hispanic students in Texas medical schools is notably lower than in Florida, especially in light of the fact that one in four Texans are Hispanic—twice the level of Florida. No Texas school approaches that percentage of Hispanic students. However, the percentages of Hispanics enrolled at six of the Texas schools compare well to those of black students at the schools that are leaders in that area. The 14.7 percent Hispanic enrollment at **The University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio** is particularly impressive, and, in the SREB region, second only to the University of Miami. As in Florida, the geographical location of the eight Texas medical schools undoubtedly plays some role in determining which schools Hispanic students are most likely to attend. Cultural and economic differences among Hispanics of differing backgrounds also may play some role in the difference between enrollments of Hispanic medical students in Florida and Texas.

TABLE 4
Growth in Enrollment of Hispanic Students in Medical Schools in Florida and Texas, 1990-91 to 1992-93

STATE - % Hispanics in Population	1990-91 ENROLLMENT			1992-93 ENROLLMENT			PERCENT CHANGE 1990 TO 1992	
MEDICAL SCHOOL	TOTAL	HISPANIC	PERCENT	TOTAL	HISPANIC	PERCENT	TOTAL	HISPANIC
FLORIDA - 12.2%	**1,812**	**200**	**11.0%**	**1,899**	**222**	**11.7%**	**4.8%**	**11.0%**
Southeastern Col of Osteopathic Med *	426	48	11.3	493	64	13.0	15.7	33.3
U of Florida College of Medicine	456	27	5.9	458	20	4.4	0.4	-25.9
U of Miami School of Medicine	553	87	15.7	565	100	17.7	2.2	14.9
U of South Florida Col of Medicine	377	38	10.1	383	38	9.9	1.6	0.0
TEXAS - 25.5%	**4,750**	**434**	**9.1**	**4,892**	**468**	**9.6**	**3.0**	**7.8**
Baylor College of Medicine *	651	45	6.9	656	45	6.9	0.8	0.0
Texas A&M U College of Medicine	193	20	10.4	193	18	9.3	0.0	-10.0
Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine	372	29	7.8	416	36	8.7	11.8	24.1
Texas Tech U School of Medicine	389	29	7.5	397	13	3.3	2.1	-55.2
U of Texas Medical School-Houston	768	68	8.9	794	76	9.6	3.4	11.8
U of Texas Medical School-San Antonio	818	108	13.2	831	122	14.7	1.6	13.0
U of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston	768	67	8.7	808	89	11.0	5.2	32.8
U of Texas Southwestern Med Sch-Dallas	791	68	8.6	797	69	8.7	0.8	1.5

* Independent school

SOURCES: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; Association of American Medical Colleges; SREB Survey of Medical School Enrollments, 1992-93.

TABLE 5

Growth in Enrollment of Native American Students in Medical Schools in SREB States, 1990-91 to 1992-93

STATE - % Native Americans in Population / MEDICAL SCHOOL	1990-91 ENROLLMENT TOTAL	1990-91 NATIVE AMERICAN	1990-91 PERCENT	1992-93 ENROLLMENT TOTAL	1992-93 NATIVE AMERICAN	1992-93 PERCENT	PERCENT CHANGE 1990 TO 1992 TOTAL	PERCENT CHANGE 1990 TO 1992 NATIVE AMERICAN
All Schools in SREB States - 0.7%	**20,740**	**97**	**0.5%**	**21,449**	**115**	**0.5%**	**3.4%**	**18.6%**
All U.S. Schools - 0.8%	**71,955**	**313**	**0.4**	**73,517**	**378**	**0.5**	**2.2**	**20.8**
Percent in SREB Schools	28.8%	31.0%		29.2%	30.4%			
Oklahoma - 8.0%	**812**	**43**	**5.3**	**865**	**54**	**6.2**	**6.5**	**25.6**
U of Oklahoma College of Medicine	539	27	5.0	569	38	6.7	5.6	40.7
Oklahoma State U Col of Osteopathic Med	273	16	5.9	296	16	5.4	8.4	0.0
North Carolina - 1.2%	**1,828**	**14**	**0.8**	**1,841**	**11**	**0.6**	**0.7**	**-21.4**
East Carolina U School of Medicine	289	7	2.4	298	5	1.7	3.1	-28.6
U of North Carolina School of Medicine	643	5	0.8	649	6	0.9	0.9	20.0
Duke U School of Medicine *	459	2	0.4	459	0	0.0	0.0	-100.0
Bowman Gray School of Medicine *	437	0	0.0	435	0	0.0	-0.5	0.0

* Independent school

SOURCES: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine; Association of American Medical Colleges; SREB Survey of Medical School Enrollments, 1992-93.

Native American Students

According to the 1990 Census, Native Americans make up less than one percent of the population of both the nation and the SREB region. As with Hispanics, Native Americans tend to be concentrated in certain states. Almost half of the Native Americans in the SREB region live in Oklahoma, representing eight percent of that state's population. The only other SREB state with more than one percent is North Carolina, at 1.2 percent.

The percentages of Native American students in both U.S. and SREB region medical schools are approximately one-half of one percent (Table 5). The actual numbers of students have grown steadily, expanding by almost 21 percent nationally in the last two years, and by almost 19 percent in the region.

The percentage of Native American students enrolled in Oklahoma's two medical schools increased by more than 25 percent between 1990-91 and 1992-93, from 5.3 percent to 6.2 percent of total enrollment. The **University of Oklahoma** accounted for all of this growth, and its 6.7 percent of Native American students is rapidly approaching the state's population figure. The percentage of Native Americans enrolled at the **Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine** declined during this same period, though the actual number of students remained constant. Oklahoma State's enrollment percentage remains quite respectable relative to the state's population, however, especially when compared to enrollments of minority students at many schools in other states.

The percentage of North Carolina medical students who are Native Americans declined slightly during this period, but the actual numbers are too small to draw any firm conclusions about trends. **East Carolina University** enrolled a total of only five Native American students during 1992-93, but that yielded a percentage figure of 1.7, substantially higher than the state's 1.2 percent population figure. Although the numbers may be too small to have much statistical significance, when combined with East Carolina's leadership in enrolling black students, they offer strong evidence for the school's commitment to serving North Carolina's minority populations.

Discussion

The growth in enrollment of minority medical students in the region is encouraging. It is clear that schools that were among the leaders in recruiting and retaining minority students two years ago are continuing to build upon their successful experience. It is also clear that a number of schools that were not doing very well in this area two years ago have made positive strides.

Overall, the region and the nation still have some distance to go to provide black, Hispanic, and Native American students with truly equal opportunities in medical education. Many of the factors involved are not fully in the medical schools' control, however, most notably, the relatively low high school and college graduation rates for these minority groups. The recent increases in the minority applicant pool, however, offer improved prospects for the future.

Despite the positive overall picture in the region, there is still reason for concern about those states that have large minority populations but whose medical schools continue to enroll very small relative percentages of minority students. This is especially difficult to understand given the steady progress that some states have made in this respect.

As pointed out in the 1991 SREB report, it is important to recognize that making medical schools more responsive to the needs of minority students has benefits for all types of students. The 1991 study found that schools with high enrollments of minority students tended to offer both more support services and more flexibility in dealing with the individual needs of all students. At many of these schools, for example, nonminority students from rural backgrounds have benefited particularly. The result is increased opportunities for all citizens and, ultimately, increased diversity among physicians.

SREB will continue to monitor enrollments of minority students in the region's medical schools on a regular basis. Continuing efforts also will be made to identify the kinds of strategies that can help the region as a whole and individual programs increase the percentage of minority students able take advantage of all types of health professions education.